

□ 1050

JOINT MEETING OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II IBN AL HUSSEIN, KING OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

The Speaker of the House presided.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Mrs. Kerri Hanley, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Majesty King Abdullah II into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN);

The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS);

The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN);

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY);

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT);

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM);

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN);

The gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA); and

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY);

The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT);

The Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL); and

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Roble Olhaye, Ambassador of the Republic of Djibouti.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

At 11 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m., the Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced

His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II IBN AL HUSSEIN, KING OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN.

King ABDULLAH II. Madam Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Honorable Senators and Members of Congress, my friends, thank you for such a warm welcome. It is an honor to stand, as my father did, before this historic institution. Allow me to thank you on behalf of all Jordanians.

Jordan and the United States have had a long friendship. It is a special privilege to be here in the year that the American Congress welcomes its first woman Speaker and its first Muslim-American Member of Congress. These milestones send a message around the world about the America I know so well, a place where individuality is nurtured, a place where hard work is rewarded, a place where achievement is celebrated. The America I know so well believes that opportunity and justice belong to all.

In my days in Massachusetts, I also learned something about New England virtues. There wasn't actually a law about talking too much, but there was definitely an attitude that you didn't speak unless you could improve on silence.

Today, I must speak, and I cannot be silent.

I must speak about a cause that is urgent for your people and for mine. I must speak about peace in the Middle East. I must speak about peace replacing the division, war, and conflict that have brought such disaster for the region and for the world.

This was the cause that brought my father King Hussein here in 1994. With Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin beside him, he spoke of a new vision for the Middle East. Their courageous work for peace received bipartisan support from your leaders. And there was tremendous hope for a new era. There was tremendous hope that people would be brought together. There was tremendous hope that a final and comprehensive settlement of all the issues would be achieved.

Thirteen years later, that work is still not completed. And until it is, we are all at risk. We are all at risk of being victims of further violence re-

sulting from ideologies of terror and hatred. It is our greatest and most urgent duty to prevent such dangers to our region, to your country and to the world. The choice is ours: an open world full of promise, progress and justice for all; or a closed world of divided peoples, fear, and unfulfilled dreams. Nothing impacts this choice more than the future of peace in the Middle East.

I come to you today at a rare, and indeed historic, moment of opportunity, when there is a new international will to end the catastrophe. And I believe that America, with its enduring values, its moral responsibility, and yes, its unprecedented power, must play the central role.

Some may say, "Peace is too difficult. We can live with the status quo." But, my friends, violent killings are taking place as part of this status quo. Palestinians and Israelis are not the only victims. We saw the violence ricochet into destruction in Lebanon last summer. And people around the world have been the victims of terrorists and extremists who use the grievances of this conflict to legitimize and encourage acts of violence. Americans and Jordanians and others have suffered and survived terrorist attacks. In this room, there are representatives of American families and Jordanian families who have lost loved ones. Thousands of people have paid the highest price, the loss of their life. Thousands more continue to pay this terrible price, for their loved ones will never return. Are we going to let these thousands of lives be taken in vain? Has it become acceptable to lose that most basic of human rights? The right to live?

The status quo is also pulling the region and the world towards greater danger. As public confidence in the peace process has dropped, the cycle of crises is spinning faster, and with greater potential for destruction. Changing military doctrine and weaponry pose new dangers. Increasing numbers of external actors are intervening with their own strategic agendas, raising new dangers of proliferation and crisis. These are groups that seek even more division: faith against faith, nation against nation, community against community. Any further erosion in the situation would be serious for the future of moderation and coexistence, in the region and beyond. Have we all lost the will to live together in peace celebrating one another's strengths and differences?

Some may say, "But there are other, urgent challenges." How can there be anything more urgent than the restoration of a world where all people, not only some people, all people have the opportunity to live peacefully? This is not only a moral imperative. It is essential to the future of our world, because long-term, violent crisis is the enemy of all global prosperity and progress.

Certainly our era faces critical issues. There is great public concern